

"A LOVE AFFAIR WITH THE HEBER VALLEY, U.S.A."

—Wallace Stegner

I hate to write about a place I am fond of, because if I make it sound as good as I think it is, I may encourage other people, including entrepreneurs, to overrun and "improve" it. But to record my love affair with the Heber Valley, which is sunk among the mountains sixty miles southeast of Salt Lake City, seems reasonably safe. The place has a way of corroborating itself over the years; every time I revisit it I get an almost spooky repetition of satisfactions I have felt there before. The only people who have so far improved it have, by dint of good sense and good taste, spoiled nothing. Besides, the Heber Valley is close to no city except Salt Lake City, it is off the railroad, and its offerings of beauty, peace, and the combined pleasures of pastoral villages and wild mountains are not likely to slow down many of the cars that go through it on Highway 40.

I saw it first a long time ago, when I awoke in the jolting back end of a truck filled with Boy Scouts headed for a fishing trip in the high Uintas. We had fallen asleep almost as soon as we left Salt Lake. When I stood up among the tangle of legs and sleeping bags I saw that we were in a bowl valley. The sky was beginning to lighten, the stars looked pale. Dark mountains were painted across the sky to the north, mountains ahead of us were notched with a canyon pass, the east was solid, high mountains on whose ridge Venus glowed as steady as a lamp. I was cold and wind-buffed; I felt lonely and wonderful to be running in the dark through strange country, along a river belted with great cottonwoods, through the overtaken lights of a village. But when I turned and looked west I think I stopped breathing.

There the sky was dark and polished. High against it, lifting from black slopes and above terraces streaked with horizontal snowbanks, the Wasatch threw up a great grey gleaming *massif* of snow and stone, and just above the mountain's long roof, dully metallic, as round and unluminous as a nickel, was pasted the moon. I could have reached up and peeled it off the sky like a corn plaster. The wind that came down cold off the magnificent mountain was the breath of eternity.

That was Timpanogos, the highest mountain in the Wasatch at just about 12,000 feet. It is not high as western mountains go, but there are few mountains anywhere more impressive. I saw it again this summer, driving out on another

fishing trip. This time the sky had not yet begun to lighten even in the east, and the stars burned with pure brilliance. All the more startling, then, to see the ghostly, aloof, remote mountain rearing across the west as if it had some phosphorescence in its rock, and right above it, pasted in the same spot where it might have hung every night since I was twelve, the same unluminous moon, but this time dark, coppery, a penny moon with its face worn to a blur. Since seeing it first I had had the standard tourist experience of standing on Tiger Hill outside Darjeeling and watching the dawn come down rosy on the snowy horn of Kanchenjunga. It was colder on Tiger Hill, and Kanchenjunga was over three miles higher than Timpanogos, but I don't think it was more beautiful. If Rousseau had painted mountains, he might have painted them as Timpanogos looks from the Heber Valley just before day-break.

My second look at the valley came a year or two after the first. I had hiked over the divide from Brighton, at the head of Big Cottonwood Canyon where for a hundred years Salt Lake City people have had summer cottages. As I came onto the ridge above Bonanza Flat, with the scoop of Snake Creek Canyon below me, the whole world opened eastward. It was September. I did not know it then, but the Wasatch takes second to no place in America, even Vermont, in the splendour of its fall colours. The slopes of Snake Creek Canyon were a wash of yellows, from lemon to red-gold, sometimes on the same tree, but always in great masses from the aspen's habit of growing in groves. Light came off the shimmering leaves until the very air was gold. On the highest slopes the balsams were nearly black; down below the aspens the mountains spread a tufted, woolly carpet of bronze and gold where scrub oak made a dense chaparral; where the bare sagebrush spurs swept around the north the slopes were desert greys and greens. The valley itself lay below me as green as a salad bowl, cut up by trees along a half dozen creeks and bisected from north to south by the band of cottonwoods just turning, a blend of green and gold, along the Provo River. I could see the villages of Midway and Heber, and another I did not know down to the south where Daniels Canyon cut through the southern spur.

If I had been looking for a promised land I could have found none fairer. The air that day tasted and smelled like the day it was made. I could have walked forty miles, and did perhaps walk twenty, and all the way down Snake Creek's

from Hope Mohr 8-7-89

BY WALLACE STEGNER

Editor's Note: *Wallace Stegner once said he would rather "inhale ten thousand allergies across a windy pasture than Chanel or Houbigant or even Canadian Club in a penthouse."* Professor of English and director of the Creative Writing Center at Stanford University, he defined in *The Writer in America* the chief duty of a writer-professor: "to promote the conception of writing in which fine writing is its own award." Product of a peripatetic pioneering family, Stegner recounted the experiences of such a family on "almost the last frontier" in his major novel, *The Big Rock Candy Mountain*.

gorgeous length I kept having the routine loveliness interrupted by tongues of dark red sumac down a watercourse, or a brilliant maple blooming scarlet among the scrub oak's bronze. I think it was that day that I first discovered the bitter, wormwood goodness of aspen smoke, though I had been smelling it all my life. Some places have that quality; they are like mescaline, they permit or invite or compel you to make use of your senses.

There is a road building across that divide now. For two summers an engineering battalion of the Utah National Guard has held its annual encampment there and exercised itself roughing out a road to connect the Heber Valley with Brighton and also with a ridge road leading down to American Fork Canyon and the Timpanogos Cave National Monument. When it is finished it will be one of the spectacular roads of the West. It is spectacular now, though it is hardly yet a road. My wife and I came over it in a borrowed pickup truck in the fall of 1956, when it was nothing but boulders and tree trunks and raw earth. It took us nearly three hours to make nine miles, but if we hadn't been worried about the borrowed truck we would have gloried in every minute of it. For there it lay, September again, unchanged, exactly as it had bewitched me when I was twelve: the slopes of gold and scarlet and bronze, the green bowl, the snow-flecked ridge of the wild Wolf Creek country eastward. The only change was the Deer Creek Reservoir that now spread blue water across the valley's south end, and to Californians used to seeing wilderness become suburbs overnight, that did not seem too radical a change in thirty-five years.

I did not see the Heber Valley again after my second visit for a good many years, until my wife and I went up to the Heber Hot Pots for a long week end of rest in 1936. The Hot Pots, a string of hot springs stretching from the mouth of Snake Creek Canyon almost to the Provo River, had made the valley a local resort for nearly a hundred years. Only two little run-down places were operating; we flipped a coin and found ourselves in an old-fashioned room in a house built of "potrock" which the springs have deposited in cones and sheets all across the west end of the valley. There was nobody much around; we swam in the brown, warm, odourless water, ate a solid supper served by a pleasant woman with a German

accent, and went to bed. The window sills we leaned on for a last look at the velvet country dark were two feet deep, and scarlet Virginia creeper was curling in behind the sash. From the village of Midway a half mile or so away there was no sound; near at hand we heard only the rattle of cottonwood leaves. The air was the chilly, thinned air of 6,000 feet, and in it we smelled alfalfa fields, the mud and grass of irrigation ditches, the witch hazel odour of willows along some creek, the bitter, wonderful autumn pungency of aspen.

We waked to a robin—a robin who, like all his kind, awoke as if someone had kicked him, and with the loudest chirp he would utter all day. Gradually, half-heard and half-recognized, other birds joined in: siskins, chipping sparrows, warblers, mourning doves. Light grew from grey to green to green-gold; sun was tangled in big trees outside. Lying between sleep and waking, I was vague about where I was, and when I heard the many-tuned soft *tinkle-clunk-clang* of cowbells a good way off, I might have thought I was in Switzerland. As I learned later, those would have been old Cooney Gertsch's cows going to pasture down the street of Midway, and Cooney and his bells both came from Wengen, under the Jungfrau. We were cautioned that if we heard yodelling we should not be surprised; it would only be some Huber, Schneitter, Alplanalp, Probst, Sulser, Abbeglen, Buhler, or other of the seventy per cent of Midway's population that is of Swiss birth or descent.

Until we spent that pastoral week end at the Hot Pots I had thought of the Heber Valley as part of the mountain wilderness, for it lies at the junction of two great ranges, where the east-west Uintas meet the north-south Wasatch. It is surrounded by the Wasatch, Uinta, and Ashley National Forests, within minutes of the little-visited eastern face of the Wasatch and within hours of the remotest back-pack wildernesses of the Uintas. Provo River and its tributary creeks are stocked with rainbow and brook; Strawberry Reservoir, twenty-five miles southeast, has been a famous lake for native cutthroat for a half century. The ski resorts of Alta and Brighton are only a few miles westward as the eagle flies. But now we discovered something else, that the valley was Swiss in more than its inhabitants and scenery. For it turned out to be humanized and used like a Swiss valley; it looks raked and tamed, and in that it is unlike any western American mountain valley I know. The reasons are three: this is the best-watered valley in Utah, the people are Swiss, the local culture is Mormon.

The life of a village such as Midway has a flavour as definite as that of a Vermont village, but special and distinct; and Midway is special even among Mormon villages. This little town of a few hundred has a community hall that seats 1,100; they built it cooperatively during the Depression as a means of thumbing their noses at hard times. In the two "ward houses," one old and one new, which are the dynamos of such a town's life, strangers are welcomed, for after all Mormonism is a proselytizing religion; but quite apart from that, these are very friendly people, and by no means rubes or hayseeds. Most of them speak at least two languages as a matter of course; many have served missions of two years or more abroad; the local chairman of the Daughters of the Utah Pioneers is an actress whose life has been spent mainly in Canada, Australia, China, and Chicago; the storekeeper who sells you a fishing license will pull out his notebook and read you a passage of Sandburg he has liked, or (Continued on page 192)

HEBER VALLEY

(Continued from page 133)

maybe a poem of his own; a farmer up to his knees in muck beside a manure spreader will talk scientific agriculture that would baffle a county agent. In morning or evening "meeting" on Sundays you will encounter no horned polygamists, but only the amiable farmer who has been irrigating near your inn, and who turns out to be the bishop, and a bunch of townspeople, clean, curious, lively, devoted to community good works, and skillfully organized into a resemblance to that Utah symbol, a beehive. Go to "Mutual"—the Young Men's and Young Woman's Mutual Improvement Association—which meets on Tuesday night in every ward house in Zion, and be impressed with how a church-centered society bent upon old-fashioned virtues can make everyone from childhood up a participating and responsible member of the group. You don't have to be either a Mormon or a sociologist to enjoy contact with a society so coherent and—perish the word—quaint.

If you happen to be around in July you can attend the Swiss Days festival which has been flourishing for the past few years. Try Nephi Probst's smoked sausage; listen to the glee clubs and choruses, which are surprisingly good; and mingle, on Midway's main street which for a day or two is an old-world market, with Mormon farmers in *lederhosen*, Mormon girls in bodices, Mormon cows with bells on, contestants in the state archery contest imitating William Tell.

None of that was yet begun when we stayed at old Schneitter's Hot Pots in 1936, but we learned the charm of Midway's shaded streets, laid out on the four-square pattern of Mormon revelation and sparsely set with houses that illustrate every stage of development since the first settlement in 1857. There are still-solid log houses from the original village; and pot-rock houses, square and lilac-smothered, almost as old; and frame houses of later vintage; and at least two gingerbread houses, bright red brick with trimmings of white wooden lace, that were built by the grandfather of Senator Watkins of Utah. He made everything in them, the bricks, the mortar, the sills and lintels, the beams and floor boards, by hand.

When we came over the National Guard's road from Brighton

twenty years after our 1936 stay, we were afraid of what we would find. Mere prosperity could have destroyed a lot of the charm, and progress could have ruined the place utterly. The first place we came to was the old resort of Schneitter's Hot Pots, and our hearts sank. It was now called the Homestead. The old main building had grown a new wing and had had its face lifted by a handsome Georgian portico; the bath houses were enlarged, renewed, painted; the old Virginia House was as it had been, but even lovelier than we remembered it, with the creeper burning in red scrolls over the white-painted stone. The potrock milkhouse had been remade into motel units, and a new motel unit was half hidden in the old picnic grove. There was a larger and bluer pool beside the old brown one we had swum in. Stables and corrals, with a hundred-year-old log cabin for a tack house, had been put in by the front entrance, a creek had been diverted to run past the windows of the dining room, the lawns had been renewed and kept green, there was a new picnic grove down on Pine Creek, and below it a pay-by-the-fish trout pond. We scouted it all with suspicion: it was really terribly attractive, it was done with taste, it was totally charming. But wasn't such an inn maybe an intrusion here, a false note in the community and the valley, the beginning of the end?

It took time, and another stay the following summer, but our anxieties were finally allayed. The Homestead is not only a good inn, it is an appropriate one, a local operation. After all, what would a Swiss valley be without a good hotel?

The Whitaker brothers who bought out Noble Schneitter's old run-down beer garden and swimming pool in 1951 were actually local boys in a sense. They had lived in Heber as children, their father had taught music in the Heber High School. Like many Utah young people they had drifted out elsewhere looking for wider opportunities, and their various and lively talents had led them into many things. Ferrin had been art director for Sears Roebuck, later owner of a successful Chicago advertising agency, later a free-lance painter. Scott had been

(Continued on page 193)

your hair-do
can make
a new
you!

Restor

wonder-working salon hair treatment

One salon treatment, and suddenly your hair is outrageously pretty! RESTOR gives hair new body, sheen, luster. Makes dyes look natural. Restores hair to normal after bleaches, tints, dyes or too many permanents. Glamourizes bleaches! Works its incomparable wonders *inside* the hair shaft! Proved by millions of successful salon treatments both here and abroad. Results guaranteed. Ask your operator for RESTOR Hair Treatment... today!

• at better beauty salons everywhere, and in the salons of such respected department stores as Abraham and Strauss, J.L. Brandeis and Sons, Marshall Field & Co., Foley Bros., & Burdines.

BÜTY-WAVE PRODUCTS COMPANY • 7323 BEVERLY BOULEVARD • LOS ANGELES 36, CALIFORNIA

FOR HELP

on school and college
problems, consult

VOGUE'S SCHOOL DIRECTORY

It appears in
the first of the
month issues
throughout the year,
and in the fifteenth
of the month issues
of January, February,
March, and April.

You may write

or telephone

VOGUE'S SCHOOL BUREAU

420 Lexington Avenue
New York 17, New York
LExington 2-7500

Delores Makes the
Difference.
Discreetly



And the difference is an accent so natural it's your secret, alone. It's the Harlequin cup plus a contour-created foam rubber insert to mold you gently upward and outward to the moment of today's silhouette. Next time try Delores... you'll see and feel that wonderful difference, instantly.

Shown is Delores' Mid-Length Bra of nylon lace. Lavish use of elastic and spiral mesh boning for stay-put comfort.

White or Black, About \$7.95
Sizes: 32 & 34 ABC, 36 AB, 38 A

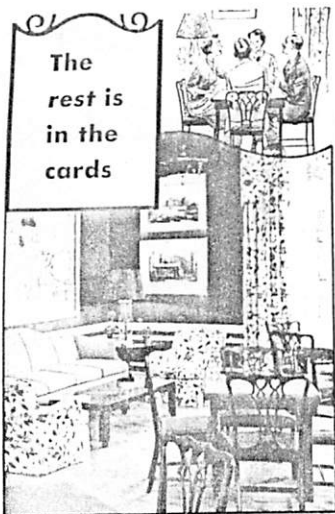
*Reg. U. S. Pat. Off.

at these and other fine stores:

Miami, Florida—Burdine's
Jacksonville, Fla.—Cohen's
Sacramento, Cal.—Rich's
Chattanooga, Tenn.—Loveman's
Charleston, W. Va.—Diamond
San Antonio, Texas—Siegel's

DELORES

Lakeland,
Florida



Hum-drum dreary? Responsibility weary? The Gideon deals out good rest in our card room, writing room, TV lounge, snooze-wooding suites... doing exactly as you please. And imagine—next door—the world-famous Spa! Now's a good time of year for the restoration cure... for nerve-soothing mineral baths. Roads always open to The Gideon. For reservations or free booklet, write Myron H. Woolley, Manager. Privately operated at The Saratoga Spa, Saratoga Springs, N. Y. The Spa is Owned and its Health Services Operated by The State of New York



Amazing Creamy Pomade Tones Down Gray Hair

Keeps it neat, alive, young!

If the years have stolen the color and natural oils from your hair, leaving streaks of dry lifeless gray, simply use HERBOLD POMADE as your regular hair dressing. Gradually, subtly, in 1 to 3 weeks, your hair will look young again.

This one and only HERBOLD POMADE is a unique hair cream, rich in special fine oils, that conditions dry hair, restores the look of life—as it re-colors gray hair. Not a coal tar dye, tint, or rinse. That's why you can't have a dyed, artificial look, or a sudden change in appearance, or gray showing at the scalp.

It's real easy. No mess or bother. No skin tests. No one can tell you're using anything but a fine hair dressing. No confusion about shades. Just one creamy pomade blends in the right color for your hair, so perfectly it will look like it did before it turned gray, and keep it that way for as long as you use Herbold Pomade.

So why wait? Even if you have only a few gray hairs—streaked with gray—completely gray—or if your hair has been dyed—start using Herbold Pomade today. In a few weeks friends will forget you were once old and gray; instead they'll think of you as young, beautifully groomed.

Wonderful for Men and Women. At Drug and Cosmetic counters, \$1.25 and \$3—New Liquid Pomade, \$2 (plus tax).

FREE: "How Aging Skin and Hair can be young looking again". Send to: Herbold Lab., Dept. V, 8008 West 3rd St., Hollywood 48, California.

HEBER VALLEY

(Continued from page 192)

an animator for Disney, and a writer of screen plays. Berlin was an executive in the water-softener business, Bob an oil company representative, Jack a radio MC in Salt Lake City, Wetzel a professor at Brigham Young University, and so on. The only one of them you are not likely to encounter at the Homestead—probably wiping dishes or saddling a horse for a customer in a hurry, or watering lawns, or testing the pools, or doing something useful—is one who is preoccupied with his public relations duties for Howard Hughes and his dates to play the double bass with Bing Crosby's recording orchestra. It was Ferrin who started them in the hotel business. He came through on a fishing trip and fell instantly in love with the place he had remembered ever since his boyhood as the best place he ever lived in. When he wired his brothers to see if they were interested they came in like a cued chorus.

Being artists, Ferrin and Scott have made the Homestead into something as easy on the eye, in its way, as the valley itself; being Mormons, the Whitaker tribe has made itself and its operations a part of the village life. What has resulted from the fusion of outside-world sophistication with local simplicities is something unique, charming, comfortable, impeccably run, and yet unmistakably part of the Mormon West.

Come in around dinner time, headed for rare roast beef the way no local housewife ever learned to make it, or pan-fried trout ten minutes out of a cold stream, and you will probably find Scott Whitaker, if he isn't conducting a bingo game or drawing caricatures in the dining room, sitting in the lobby pumping the old player piano. Around him will be ten or twenty people, diners headed in or headed out, who have been subverted by the strains of "Beautiful Ohio" or "Till We Meet Again," and they will be singing their lungs out and having the time of their lives. Call it corny, but everybody passing through the lobby is caught, and loves it. And it is in total keeping with the character of the Whitakers, of the Homestead, and of the village. Village Mormons are the greatest singers around pianos and lampposts in the world.

In this odd mixture of levis

and the grey flannel suit, costume is what you elect to wear. There is no bar—Utah forbids them—but there is no beer, which would be legal, either. The reason is not village stuffiness but a dislike of the kind of crowd beer might bring. Fetch your own bottle and the service is prompt and cheerful with the setups. And among the people with whom you share the swimming pools, trails, lobby, and dining room, the consistent mixture obtains: movie stars and celebrities hunting quiet are mixed up with farmers having a meal out, college kids from Salt Lake, families taking a family holiday, fishermen, tourists, everybody. The waitresses, some of them local girls, some members of the Whitaker family, are likely to linger at a table talking to guests about parties they have attended together.

The village of Midway is still there, altered hardly at all. The trout are just as numerous as they used to be in the creeks and in the Strawberry. The wilderness mountains are still there. The deer still come down and eat the farmers' apples, the fall colorings are unchanged, and the view of them from the Homestead is exactly what it used to be from Schneitter's Hot Pots. That degree of stability, especially in the West, is almost inconceivable.

And if you are lucky you may be at the Homestead one of the nights when Scott and Ferrin Whitaker put on one of the oldest of all village entertainments, a moonlight hayride. Your day, whether you have spent it soaking in the pool or riding or fishing or simply holding down a hammock in the grove, can end with the rock and roll of wagon wheels in soft dust, the comfortable sounds and smell of horses, the voices of a lot of relaxed people from everywhere singing sentimental songs to Ferrin's guitar. Then late, sleepy, de-pressurized, back to the Homestead and a bed selected by someone who knew about the slipped disk and the arches in the fourth lumbar vertebra. Minutes later, or so it seems, will come the green-gold light and the startled preep of the first robin, and if you listen you may hear the recurrent music of Cooney Gertsch's cowbells issuing a many-tuned promise that this day will be just such another as the one just past.

For varicose veins

51 gauge ALL-ELASTIC STOCKINGS by Bauer & Black



So like regular nylons you'll no longer feel "different"

No longer are varicose veins a "problem" condition. Today's woman wears the new, sheer elastic stockings... and moves through her busy day (and evening) unhampered by pain or unsightly hose.

Sheer yet all elastic

Her secret: 51 gauge elastic stockings by Bauer & Black. For these are the only full-fashioned, full-foot hose that employ the famous Bauer & Black principle of all-elastic support (with rubber in every supporting thread).

Naturally, more doctors prescribe Bauer & Black all-elastic stockings than any part-elastic brand. There's a style and price for every occasion—at drug, department, surgical stores.

Bauer & Black

Division of The Kendall Company

MAIL COUPON FOR COMPLETE INFORMATION
Bauer & Black, Dept. V-2, 309 W. Jackson Blvd., Chicago 6, Ill.
Send free booklet on the complete wardrobe of Bauer & Black all-elastic stockings for new leg beauty and comfort (from \$6.90 to \$16.95).
Name _____
Address _____
City _____ Zone _____ State _____

SCRAPBOOK
(FROM "THE HOUSE OF DREAMS")

This is my scrapbook • Here I keep my treasured thoughts—come take a peep. Come, kindred spirits, you will find a thought to cheer your troubled mind. These things I've cherished—odds and ends—I share them with my dearest friends • Come sit beside me and we'll look, and turn the pages of this book, and dream a dream of happy things—of trees and stars and flowers and wings • Life is a scrapbook, torn and old, in which our little lives are told • And when the twilight shadows fall, this is the sweetest thing of all: To turn the pages of the years, remembering with happy tears the faithful love, the perfect friend • These things we treasure to the end.

—PATIENCE STRONG

DO I COPE? NOPE!!!

Have I finished my house-cleaning, you ask.

No!

I'm increasingly inefficient, I fear.

Once I had a certain month for this task—

Now I don't even have a certain year.

LORD, THOU KNOWEST BETTER than I know myself that I am growing older and will some day be old. Keep me from the fatal habit of thinking I must say something on every subject and on every occasion. Release me from craving to straighten out everybody's affairs. Make me thoughtful but not moody, helpful but not bossy. With my vast store of wisdom, it seems a pity not to use it all, but Thou knowest, Lord, that I want a few friends at the end.

KEEP MY MIND free from the recital of endless details; give me wings to get to the point. Seal my lips on my aches and pains. They are increasing and love of rehearsing them is becoming sweeter as the years go by. I dare not ask for grace enough to enjoy the tales of others' pains but help me to endure them with patience.

I DARE NOT ASK for improved memory but for a growing humility and a lessening cocksureness when my memory seems to clash with the memories of others. Teach me the glorious lesson that occasionally I may be mistaken.

KEEP ME reasonably sweet; I do not want to be a Saint — some of them are so hard to live with — but a sour old person is one of the crowning works of the devil. Give me the ability to see good things in unexpected places and talents in unexpected people. And give me, Lord, the grace to tell them so. AMEN.